

Hello, Riding Friends! Is it just me, or has the World been going nuts lately? Between wars, politics, bad weather and viruses, I don't want to turn on the TV. One positive thing I guess is that the serious outbreak of the Ebola Virus has taken the Center for Disease Control's focus away from their identifying Motorcycling as a Health Problem, with Mandatory Universal Helmet Legislation as the cure! This is an issue which will require Eternal Vigilance on our part, I'm afraid. The MRF is keeping an eye on this, so periodically log onto www.mrf.org and read the news releases. The Government isn't turning it's attention away from confiscating Patch Insignia from Motorcycle Clubs either, which is why NCOM continues to fight the Feds to defend our First Amendment Rights! Keep abreast of this important issue by checking out www.onabike.com, www.okcoc.org and www.usdefenders.org

My heart is saddened from learning that members of ABATE's NW69 Chapter were victimized in a serious crash caused by someone intoxicated, and good thoughts go out to Chris, Brigitte and Christian for their speedy recovery, and also to their Mother Donna. Our ABATE Family was dealt a blow on July 14, when "Ripper" Bailey died after being in the hospital over three weeks. He sustained a serious heart attack and stroke from which he never recovered. Ripper left us peacefully, with family and friends around him. My fellow ABATE Lifetime Member was one of the first folks I met when I came to Oklahoma, and I was proud to call him Friend and Brother almost Thirty Years. His passing leaves a void which cannot be filled, and I miss him terribly. Respects and Condolences go out to his Family, along with prayers for the Lord's Peace which passes all Understanding.

TIGER'S TIP O' THE MONTH: ABATE is fervently praying for the full recovery of three of our number who were grievously injured by a drunk rider at Sturgis this year. Summer and Early Fall mark the occasion for festive, large-scale events that attract large numbers of inexperienced and irresponsible riders, and the most well-grounded among us can be victimized. Be sure to increase awareness of your surroundings proportionally to the scale and intensity of the event! Being in the midst of lots of bikes can tax your Riding Skills to the maximum. Like cruising through a strange neighborhood, mutual support is critically important. As the Air Force says: "Equal your number of Takeoffs and Landings!"

As I wrap this up, I want to give many thanks to all those who came out July 19 to support Michelle Bailey and Celebrate Ripper's life. I especially want to thank the Naysayers MC for their hospitality--it was great to see so many Bikers of all different backgrounds attending. I got to cross paths with folks I hadn't seen in a long time. Hanging out in the cool evening with good friends, great music and lightning bugs, talking about our times with Ripper was VERY special! Those of you who weren't able to show up missed a great time, and we missed you! Thanks also to those who were able to take part in Ripper's Memorial Service after the ABATE State Board Meeting on August 9. The Family appreciated your condolences, and it always does my heart good to see ABATE rally around those in our Brother- and Sisterhood. Ride Free Forever, Ripper Bailey! Let's continue to take care of each other, Ride Safely, Sober and Aware, and I'll see you next month as Halloween approaches and we prepare to encounter ghosts and goblins! Remember the timeless words of John Lennon: "Life is what happens while we're busy making Plans!"

Keep It On The Black Strip Between The Trees,
Tiger Mike